

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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R 201502Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 229

INFO RUTABA /AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 132

AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, XA

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS COMMENTS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. SUMMARY. SEVERAL PRESS COMMENTARIES IN THE PAST FEW DAYS MAY PROVIDE SOME VEILED HINTS CONCERNING SOVIET POST-ANGOLA INTENTIONS IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA. WHILE BEING FAR FROM CONCLUSIVE, THE REPORTS COULD SUGGEST THAT IN THE NEAR TERM MOSCOW PREFERS A PERIOD OF RELATIVE CALM WHILE THE DUST OF THE ANGOLA IMBROGLIO SETTLES. TAKING A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LONGER VIEW, PRESS COMMENTARIES PALYING UP THE THREAT TO

THE ENTIRE CONTINENT POSED BY SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY POWER COULD BE DESIGNED TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR INCREASED SOVIET SUPPORT OF OTHER "LIBERATION MOVEMENTS" FARTHER SOUTH. END SUMMARY.

2. PRAVDA FEB 19 CARRIES A SHORT BUT HARD-HITTING TREATISE BY R. PUCHKOV WHICH VEHEMENTLY ATTACKS AN ARTICLE IN THE LISBON NEWSPAPER LUTA WHICH CONTENTS THAT "AS A RESULT OF THE MILITARY ACTIONS IN ANGOLA, SOON ALL OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WILL BE IN THE CLUTCHES OF THE POWERFUL CUBAN, SOVIET AND CZECHOSLOVAK FORCES." AND THAT IS NOT ALL, PRAVDA ADDS. "FOR GREATER PERSUASIVENESS," THE NEWSPAPER "PRODUCED ANOTHER CANARD" THAT "CERTAIN INTERESTS OF THE SOVIET UNION" WOULD BE SERVED BY CONTINUED WAR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA "REGARDLESS OF THE WISHES OF THE MPLA."

3. ACCORDING TO PUCHKOV, HOWEVER, THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES PROVIDED "MORAL, POLITICAL, AND OTHER KINDS OF HELP TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA," BUT THIS WAS IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST BY THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT, AND WAS DESIGNED TO COUNTER ARMED AGGRESSION BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME AND THE INTERVENTION OF THE MERCENARIES. PUCHKOV STRESSES THAT THE WELL-KNOWN SOVIET POLICY OF PROTECTING PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WAS THE "INTEREST" MOSCOW HAD IN ANGOLA. IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO IGNORE LUTA'S "UNPARDONABLE FABRICATIONS", PUCHKOV CONCLUDES, IF IT WERE NOT SO OBVIOUS THAT PORTUGUESE "ANTI-SOVIET CIRCLES" WERE BEHIND THEM.

4. BY CONTRAST, AN ARTICLE IN KRASNAYA ZVEZDA FEB 19 FOCUSES ON THE THREAT TO AFRICA REPRESENTED BY THE STILL GROWING MILITARY POWER OF SOUTH AFRICA. MOST OF KRASNAYA ZVEZDA'S ATTENTION IS DIRECTED AT THE INCREASING SOPHISTICATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S WEAPONS SYSTEMS (INCLUDING THE IMPLICATION THAT PRETORIA CAN AND PERHAPS WILL BUILD NUCLEAR WEAPONS), AND CONCLUDES THAT THE "RACIST REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, WITH NATO'S ASSISTANCE, CONTINUES TO INCREASE ITS MILITARY STRENGTH," LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE SPEARHEAD OF WHICH IS AIMED AT ALL INDEPENDENT AFRICA.

5. PRAVDA FEB 20 CARRIES A TASS REPORT FROM LUANDA CITING AN MPLA POLITBURO DECLARATION THAT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA AS A SOVEREIGN STATE WILL NOT TOLERATE INTERFERENCE IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS," AND THAT ANY ATTEMPT BY THE "EXPELLED" FNLA

AND UNITA ELEMENTS TO RETURN WILL BE DECISIVELY DESTROYED. IMPLICATION IS THAT CONTINUING GUERRILLA WARFARE WOULD BE OUTSIDE AGGRESSION BY DEFINITION. THE POLITBURO DECLARATION, PRAVDA ADDS, CONCLUDED WITH A CALL FOR ALL "CITIZENS" WHO HAD BEEN DUPED BY THE PROPAGANDA OF THHE "SPLITTIST GROUPS" TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES TO HELP IN THE BUILDING OF A NATIONAL ECONOMY.

6. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH THESE REPORTS DO NOT IN THEMSELVES CONSTITUTE OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA, THEY DO PROVIDE SOME HINTS. THE ARGUMENT THAT SOUTH AFRICA POSES A THREAT TO THE ENTIRE CONTINENT HAS BEEN SEEN HERE BEFORE, BUT THE KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ACCOUNT COULD CONCEIVABLY FORESHADOW A PROPAGANDA THEME DESIGNED TO JUSTIFY A PROLONGED SOVIET PRESENCE IN THIS REGION FOLLOWING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MPLA HEGEMONY IN ANGOLA. ON THE OTHER HAND, PUCHKOV'S STRONG COUNTERTHEME, COUPLED WITH THEREPLAY OF THE MPLA POLITBURO CALL FOR "PEACE" AND THE AVOIDANCE OF A GUERRILLA WAR, COULD SUGGEST THAT MOSCOW DESIRES A BREATHING SPELL WHILE IT DIGESTS THE FRUITS OF ITS ANGOLAN SUCCESS.  
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